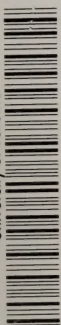


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# THE HIGH-SCHOOL LIBRARY

BY  
GILBERT O. WARD

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CHAPTER VII

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## VII

### THE HIGH-SCHOOL LIBRARY

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**Present position.**—Libraries in high schools are not new, but a widespread change in teaching methods in recent years has brought them into increased importance. This change has called upon the pupil to do work in the laboratory instead of watching demonstrations by a teacher, and to do collateral and supplementary reading in preparing for recitations instead of depending more or less exclusively upon prescribed textbooks. In proportion as the change has affected individual schools, especially in the departments of English and history, the library work of the students has been increased.

Public libraries have long served high-school teachers and students in their increasing demands with varying degrees of mutual satisfaction. But schools in which library work has become highly developed have found the ordinary forms of public-library service inadequate to the new needs; and although in many cases, for one reason or another, it will doubtless continue to be advisable or expedient for an outside library to act as substitute for a library in the school building, it is nevertheless increasingly recognized that, in the words of a state superintendent of public instruction, "No really good high school is possible without at least a fair library equipment."<sup>1</sup> This equipment may be administered by the school or by the public library. In the very small school it may mean a few picked books bought or borrowed by the school, kept in a classroom, and cared for by a teacher. But in schools large

<sup>1</sup>R. J. Aley, Books and high-school pupils. (In National Education Association Proceedings, 1909.)

enough for their departments to be differentiated, it implies a well-equipped, adequate room with several thousand volumes, and a trained librarian devoting full time to library work.

The present chapter is written with special regard to the latter type of library and with emphasis on those features of practice which distinguish high-school from other library work.

**Function.**—In its relations to the school, the high-school library corresponds in a general way to the college library rather than to the public library. Its first purpose is educational; its readers are chiefly or solely teachers and students. It differs from the normal-school library in the lack of professional aim and in the greater immaturity of its student readers. Its general functions are to supply books for class work and for cultural reading, and to impart a working knowledge of the use of books and libraries. Some specific duties are: co-operating with teachers in preparing and supervising class library work, guiding students' reading, preserving school ana, and acting as agent between public library and high school.

The first purpose of the library is for reference and reading; the occasional practice of unloading superfluous or undesirable students from classrooms upon the library makes the librarian's task of discipline much harder, hinders the library's legitimate work, and is wholly bad.

**Room.**—The library should be in an accessible, central situation, away from all noise.

In size it should be proportionate to the size of the school. There is no formula to express this proportion, but it has been found in two actual cases that a school with an enrolment of about 1,400 often sends 60 or 65 pupils to the library for library work, for a full-time single period. Both of these schools, one technical and the other academic, are situated in a large city with excellent public-library facilities.

The equipment required is of much the same kind as that in a public library of equal size. Shelving should be of the wall



type as far as possible, to permit of easy supervision. Tables accommodating not more than six or eight readers are preferable to those of larger size and should be broad enough for comfortable reference work. Important items of equipment which should not be overlooked are noiseless floor covering, closet room for supplies and new books, librarian's locker, wash basin with running water, magazine rack, vertical file, bulletin boards, and typewriter with card-cataloging attachment. A glass show case is useful for exhibition purposes.

**Library funds.**—The high-school library may derive its support from one or several of a number of sources. In many states, the law provides for the establishment or aid of school libraries. In the most progressive cities which administer their high-school libraries according to modern ideas there is an annual appropriation by the city. In any high school, the library should be represented in the budget on the same footing as other departments and the appropriation granted by the school board should be on this basis. When the public library contributes, its share is likely to take the shape of a quota for books; in such cases it also usually pays the salary of the librarian. In starting a new library, or in purchasing pictures, statuary, or other equipment which is ornamental rather than essential, it may be undesirable or impossible to obtain or utilize a regular appropriation. In such cases money may be raised from voluntary contributions, proceeds of entertainments, fines, etc. The plan, however, of relying regularly on such resources, although it may stimulate a sense of proprietorship in the school library, discriminates in favor of wealthy student bodies, is unfavorable to steady and consistent growth, and, by making a distinction between the position of the library and that of other departments, invites neglect from an indifferent school board. It is no more naturally appropriate for the high-school library to depend on such means than it is for the high-school laboratory or for a public library to be so dependent.

To insure continuous, consistently high efficiency, the high-school library, like any other active library, requires, whatever the source of its income, a regular definite appropriation available for spending as needed. When the support of a high-school library is to be shared between school board and library board, a matter for consideration in planning the division of expense is whether the school board is willing or able to furnish a regular, readily available income for books.

**Book selection.**—High-school students range in age from fourteen to eighteen years. First-year students will read many of the books read by the students of upper grammar grades; fourth-year students can use many of the books suitable for a college Freshman. Books for student use must therefore be chosen, not only with reference to their general suitability for high-school use, but with particular regard to the different ages of students.

Among books used for reference, many excellent standard works, scholarly textbooks, works of literary criticism and the like, some of which find their way into high-school book-lists and textbook bibliographies, are too detailed or difficult for high-school use. Among books for general reading, much fiction, travel, and biography, most poetry, and almost all essays require for their appreciation a mental background which even Seniors in high school can rarely possess.

Teachers' recommendations are often of great help in selecting books for special reference and study, but of much less help in choosing books for general reading. They should be welcomed, but must sometimes be followed with discrimination.

*Reference books.*—Many of the general reference books found in a well-equipped public library are useful in high-school work. Particular mention may be made of encyclopedias, unabridged dictionary, atlas, biographical dictionaries, newspaper almanacs, yearbooks, books of quotations, collections of prose and poetry, debaters' handbooks, etc.



Some important types of books of a more special nature are textbooks (especially in the sciences and useful arts), historical sourcebooks, biographies of literary or historical persons, popular works on the manners and customs of important periods, readers, illustrated popular or semi-popular works of many kinds, well-edited editions of English classics studied, translations of foreign classics adaptable to high-school use, government publications (e.g., the farmers' bulletins for agriculture and domestic science), and college and technical-school catalogs.

Books for special reference and study should be limited rather closely to the curriculum.

*General reading.*—Fiction in the high-school library is useful in inducing the reading habit, in encouraging better reading, and for general inspiration. It must be carefully selected with deference to the normal tastes and capacity of the ordinary high-school student. It should be wholesome and should have literary value.

Generally speaking, it is found that students, especially the younger ones, prefer plot to style, action to analysis, broad humor to subtle humor, romantic sentiment to humdrum experience, and the familiar to the foreign. Thus they prefer Sherlock Holmes to Marius the Epicurean, Treasure Island to Romola, Tom Sawyer to Cranford, To Have and to Hold to Joseph Vance, and The Varmint to Tom Brown at Rugby.

For inducing the reading habit, books must be direct in appeal, clear in style, and not too long. For more advanced reading, much of the tested and better popular fiction and many standard novels and classics can be used, including novels with historical backgrounds. When possible, at least one copy of a classic should be chosen in an attractive illustrated edition. The problem novel, the sex or highly colored romantic novel, the conventional school story, and the machine-made novel of

any sort are for differing but obvious reasons undesirable in the high-school library.

Biography and travel offer a convenient trail away from the exclusive pursuit of fiction. As in the case of fiction, it is necessary to consider the nature of a book's appeal, and how much mental background in the way of historical or other reading a book will need for its appreciation. Poetry in general requires to be "pushed" by a librarian or teacher who herself loves it, and should be presented in as attractive a form as possible. Comprehensive, general compilations, and works of individual poets, complete in one volume, are useful for reference, but are likely to be fine in print, heavy to handle, bulky, and unattractive. In many cases, there are attractive editions of "selected works" or of single longer poems which are much more agreeable to read, and often are quite adequate for any probable reference use.

Books of little literary value which should be represented for other reasons are accurate, up-to-date, well-illustrated works (not textbooks) of popular science and the useful arts, including books on amateur work of different kinds.

Younger students in general will enjoy many of the books which are read by the older children in the children's room of a public library.

*Magazines.*—As in the case of books, magazines are selected principally either to provide material for use in class work or for general information and recreation. Under the first head are included magazines on current events, domestic art, domestic science, and fine arts; under the second, the better general magazines and magazines of popular science.

Magazines of both kinds are useful as an aid in preserving order when students have finished their assigned work and are looking for something to do before the end of the hour. They are also valuable in schools where students come from non-reading homes as "bait" to attract students into the reading

habit. Their use must be watched somewhat in order that they may not be read to the neglect of lessons.

Magazine indexes are needed under the same circumstances as in any other library, with this difference: When the public library is better equipped with files of magazines, a magazine index in the high-school library is useful in noting references and making lists to be looked up later in the public library, and in borrowing material from the latter. High-school libraries which cannot afford to subscribe to a cumulative magazine index may be able to supply the lack in part by procuring back numbers from the public library.

*Pictures and clippings.*—Pictures are useful in illustrating topics discussed in class, for bulletin-board display, and for exhibit purposes. A collection may include portraits of authors and historic characters; pictures of places, of buildings, of events of historic or literary interest; pictures illustrating mythology, geography, industry, flowers; reproductions of works of art; specimens of design and ornament, house interiors, fashion designs, etc. They may be cheap prints, clippings from magazines, or plates from some expensive work such as Foord's Decorative flower studies, which has been cut up to make it more available. A satisfactory way of handling such material is to mount it on cardboard of uniform size, about 13½ inches by 17 inches, assign a subject-heading to each, and file the pictures vertically in alphabetical order, in covered boxes.

Useful material on current events, local history, and school happenings is preserved in the form of clippings, which are satisfactorily handled by filing them in large envelopes arranged, like pictures, alphabetically by subject-headings.

**Classification, cataloging, etc.**—In progressive libraries administered by boards of education and therefore not obliged for the sake of economy or expedience to conform to public-library practice, the following are some changes in the Dewey decimal system of classification as commonly applied in public



libraries which have proved desirable and practicable: Greek and Roman antiquities have been put with History; Language with Literature; Constitutional History with Political History; and Travel with History. English and American poets are frequently thrown into one alphabet under English Poetry; plays are similarly treated under English Drama; and essays and prose miscellany under English Essays. The result of such changes has been to increase greatly the use of the books affected.

The desirability of modifying the classification depends much on the relations of the high-school library to the public library. If the former is a branch of the latter, or a large proportion of its collection consists of library books, differences in classification lead to difficulties in shelving, in transferring from one collection to the other, and in keeping shelf-list records, etc.; and the student has to learn two systems of book arrangement—one for the public and one for the school library.

In small libraries not administered by a trained librarian, it is advisable to follow a simplified form of the Dewey classification, such as that noted in Miss Wilson's *Books for high schools*.

The cataloging needs to be simple, but to contain more analytics than in the ordinary public library.

In shelving, some schools have found it practicable and convenient to make no distinction between circulating and reference books. The latter are distinguished merely by some mark on the back and by the absence of a book pocket.

**Books for supplementary reading.**—High schools usually have a number of sets of textbooks, readers, etc., which are used for supplementary reading. In large high schools these may amount to hundreds or even thousands of volumes and require some attention as to the best method of handling.

When sets are small and few, it is possible to treat them as ordinary duplicate copies. When they are many and large, the

simplest plan is to arrange them in alphabetical order by authors and titles in some less desirable part of the library, with a shelf label to each set.

There are various ways of charging sets. They may have been prepared for the shelves by simply stamping them with the school stamp, and be charged by debiting so many copies to the teacher on a memorandum when needed for class use, or by making a temporary book card when a single copy is lent. If sets have been accessioned, the librarian may keep a list of copies lent by accession numbers. The most business-like way is to prepare each copy for circulation as any other book is prepared, omitting the shelf number on the back. Books needed in numbers may then be charged in sets to teachers, or individually to students, as preferred. By the latter plan, the time of the teacher is saved and she is relieved of the responsibility and annoyance of keeping a separate record and of recovering lost books, and the student is still held accountable for loss or damage.

**Loan work. Charging system.**—The charging system must in its operation be reliable, flexible, speedy, and simple. It must be flexible because books must be lent for periods of varying length. Books for required reading or study will go out for an hour, overnight, or for two or three days; books for general reading, for perhaps a couple of weeks; books and sets for classroom or the teachers' use, for irregular or indefinite periods or for the school term. Teachers may not be limited to a definite number of books. The outside public may have to be accommodated. Speed is required because many books must be charged and discharged in the busy intervals of changing classes. The system must be simple in order to minimize the number of mistakes in working under pressure. Local conditions will cause one or another of the qualifications mentioned to appear of particular importance; for instance, the larger the school, the more important becomes the matter of speed.

In part possibly because of local conditions, there is so much diversity of practice among high-school libraries in their charging systems that it is not possible to speak of any usage as standard. The systems of which the leading features are described below may, however, be noted as having proved practicable under local conditions.

In the high-school branch of the public library in one large city, a book pocket and book card only are used. In charging, the date of issue is stamped on both, and the borrower's name and high-school room number are added to the latter. The book card is filed in the charging tray by date of issue. This library is open to, but not greatly used by, the public.

In a girls' high school, with an approximate enrolment of 2,500 pupils, the essentials are the book card and time cards of three colors, brown, pink, and blue, which are employed according to whether a book is lent for a study period, for overnight, or for two weeks, and which bear printed information to this effect. In charging books for overnight or for a single study period, the reader's name and room number are entered upon the book card, and a pink or a brown time card is slipped into the book pocket. No dating is done. If a book is needed for two or more study periods, the librarian writes "5th" or "6th" on the brown card before slipping it into the pocket. When a book goes out for two weeks, the date due is added to a blue time card and to the book card. Of 250 books issued on a typical day, 125 require no stamping. Circulation is counted each period. The library is not open to the public.

In the systems described above, the absence of a reader's card makes it impossible to keep a check on the number of books issued to a reader. It is sometimes convenient, however, to know what or how many books a reader has out, and in schools where this is felt to be important a reader's card is required. In the high-school branches of the public library in one large city, a file of readers' cards is kept adjacent to the



file of book cards. Book number is entered upon reader's card, and date and reader's number upon book card. Due date is stamped on both and upon the book's dating slip. At overcrowded moments, the date is entered on the dating slip and on one card; both cards are fastened together with an elastic band and laid aside for completing the charge at leisure. This system is felt to be sufficiently rapid in handling loans at crowded times, but of course the time taken in finishing charges makes the total time twice as great as in a one-card system. The enrolment of the high schools in this city ranges from about 420 to 1,760; the book collections from 1,720 to 7,300 volumes; the average daily circulation in a busy month from 32 to 132 books. Attempts which have been made in some schools to have teachers and students carry their cards have not resulted satisfactorily.

The library in one high school of 260 pupils uses the Browne charging system without modification for books drawn for general use. For books lent for one period, the borrower's name is written beneath the last charge on the book card, and the book card is filed in a common pocket with other one-period cards. This library circulates about 75 books a day and is open to the public.

**Guidance of reading.**—The greatest privilege and pleasure which comes to the high-school librarian is that of personally influencing the reading of some particular boy or girl. In large schools with busy libraries this is too seldom possible, but something can be done in helping clubs to arrange programs and find material for the writing of papers. Aids to reading are lists of various kinds printed or duplicated for distribution or posted on bulletin boards, or published in the school paper.

The most serious work of this sort occurs when the library co-operates with teachers in the work of vocational guidance. To do this the library must have all the information available about local industries; books and articles giving reliable

information on miscellaneous occupations and the qualifications required to succeed in them and describing various sides of the world's work; suggestive biography; some of the better "inspirational" books; college and technical-school catalogs; and books on going to college. Much useful information may be preserved in the form of clippings. All this must be made available by lists and perhaps by a special index. The scattering material on the subject of vocations may be "featured" by collecting it on special shelves or reading racks, keeping books for the teacher separate from those for the student. The success of the library in this work depends greatly on the education, wisdom, and personality of the librarian.

A very necessary but less inspiring work of guidance is the supervision of the pupils in their regular library work. In the public library, a patron is free to read what he chooses. The high-school librarian, however, is often required to see that her patrons who have definite assignments of reading attend to their tasks. When permits are used, a satisfactory way to accomplish this is to make their checking an excuse to visit each student in turn, observing what he is reading, comparing it with any notes which teachers have added to permits, questioning cases of suspiciously irrelevant reading, and making suggestions as necessary.

**Discipline.**—The principal things which affect discipline in the high-school library are the tone of the school, the character of the librarian, the system under which the students use the library, the physical conditions, and the presence or absence of interesting general reading.

If the general order of the school is good, equally good order is to be expected in the library, although of an informal kind. It is right to insist that work be done with a minimum of conversation.

If the librarian shows by her manner that she thoroughly understands her work, she gains the respect which is accorded

to competent persons. Here, too, enters the quality of tact. When students are restless and talkative, it is often because they are having difficulty with their work, or sometimes because of simple thoughtlessness. In any case, it is always safe to assume that advice or friendly suggestion is required rather than a reprimand. For this reason and also to avoid interrupting the work of the room, it is better to speak to offenders privately than to call them to order by rapping with a pencil or speaking across the room. With serious, wilful offenders, the librarian may employ the resource of debarment from the library, and, in schools where self-government is practiced, of placing the matter before the self-government board. The librarian has of course the right to expect unhesitating support from the school office if an appeal to the office should be necessary.

Overcrowding is a source of disorder which may be avoided by arranging with teachers as to the number of pupils that may be sent to the library from each classroom or study-hall during any period. Confusion is avoided if students may enter and leave the library between periods only.

Some mechanical details which contribute to good order are the arrangement of furniture so as to make easy the quick exit and entrance of numbers; a clear view from the desk for easier supervision; keeping the room in physical order, including the restoration of books to their places; enough duplicate copies of books; the conspicuous numbering of cases and adequate labeling of shelves so as to facilitate the quick disposal of a crowd at the desk; and care and system in the checking up of permits.

Interesting general reading keeps students occupied when they have finished their assigned work and are waiting for the bell.

**Permits.**—In large schools it is usually necessary to keep track of pupils who for any purpose leave their rooms. This is often done by means of permits. Permits are usually printed



forms filled in with the name of the student, initialed by the teacher, and specifying the time for which leave is granted. The librarian requires a permit from each student, countersigns it, and returns it to the room from which the pupil came, to be checked by the teacher's record.

A simpler plan which has proved satisfactory in one school is for each student to have a permanent library permit, which is kept on file in his study-hall or room. This permit he brings with him to the library and hands to the librarian. The librarian collects the permits and returns them to the study-hall teacher, who compares them with his records and re-files. This plan presupposes that students ordinarily visit the library for a full period.

**Instruction in the use of books.**—Instruction in the use of books and the library is given primarily for its immediate usefulness in school work, and secondarily as a preparation for the use of the college library or of the public library. Its importance to intending teachers who cannot go to normal school or college may also be noted.

Book instruction varies in different schools from a single informal talk on the use of a library to (rarely) a course of twenty or thirty lessons, with written papers and credit given. Results worth while are had from courses of six or eight lessons, when time can be saved by having papers written outside of class.

Topics generally recognized as legitimate matter for instruction are the care of books, the significance of the several printed parts of a book, such as the title-page with its various items, copyright date, preface, table of contents, and index; the card catalog; the classification and arrangement of books in libraries; selected reference books, including dictionary and encyclopedia; and magazine indexes.

The topics taught, the order of their teaching, and the proportion of time allotted to a topic vary according to the time

available, the amount of previously received instruction if any, and the peculiar necessities of the situation. The instruction has often to include much that is very elementary because of the general lack of library instruction in the elementary schools. The instruction differs from that given in a normal school in that it stops with the personal needs of the student, and so in general disregards such subjects as library methods, book selection, children's literature, etc., but in schools which maintain training classes for teachers these subjects may properly receive attention.

The instruction may be an informal talk, a lecture, or a recitation. It is made concrete by the exhibition and examination of specimen books, sets of catalog cards, sample sheets of dictionaries, old numbers of periodical indexes, etc. It should always include a written or other practical test graded and credited as regular school work.

It frequently is convenient to make the library instruction part of the English course, and to have it take place at the regular hour of the English recitation. In some schools the instruction is spread through four years, in others it is concentrated in the first year. Considering the generally elementary nature of the subject-matter, and the limited time usually available for the whole course, it seems preferable to give the instruction early.

To get good results, library classes should not exceed in size the ordinary English or history class. Library instruction to classes of fifty or more is to be deprecated. Work should always receive credit.

**Relations with the public library.**—A close understanding between the public library and the high-school library is desirable in order to avoid competition and to ascertain what co-operation is possible and advisable.

One kind of co-operation which is mutually profitable is in book-buying. Here, the high school may leave to the public

library the purchase of many expensive but not essential works, many periodical sets, books seldom needed, and books of ephemeral interest in general. On the other hand, the public library can leave to the high school the purchase of many textbooks, sets for supplementary reading, and other special books of little interest outside the school.

The public library can aid the school library by lending it books, magazines, and other material to supplement its resources. It can lend copies of a book to the school to meet a temporary heavy demand. When the circulation of a book is regulated from the school library on such occasions, it is possible to give much better service with an equal number of copies.

For reference work beyond its scope, the high-school library has to send students to the public library. In such cases, the school librarian can notify the public librarian of approaching general demands. The high-school librarian can advertise the public library by posting its lists and notices, and circulating its folders, lists, and other printed matter. She can actively promote membership in the public library. One thorough-going method of doing this is to take a census of the entering class, ascertain who are not patrons of the public library, and then do personal missionary work where necessary to supplement other methods. Useful general methods are talks to students in connection with the work of library instruction, the distribution of applications for membership in the public library, etc.

In high schools too small for a regular librarian, the public library may give advice and help. Thus in California, the county libraries not only lend books to high-school libraries, but stand ready to give assistance in cataloging, book selection, debate reference work, etc. For small communities with little money to spend, the library board and school board may co-operate in employing one full-time librarian for both libraries.



**High-school branches of public libraries.**—In a number of cities, high-school libraries are very satisfactorily operated as branches of the public library, which shares the expense of them with the board of education. In one state, New Jersey, the state education department permits and recommends the administration of school libraries by public libraries.

This division of responsibility and expense varies in different places. The school furnishes room, light, and possibly ordinary janitor service. It may furnish certain kinds of books such as reference works or contribute a definite amount for the public library to spend for books; the school board may appoint the librarian on the recommendation of the public librarian, and the public library supply the books, etc. A natural arrangement in book-buying is for the school to purchase all sets of books used for supplementary reading and books permanently assigned to classrooms, such as dictionaries. Aside from these exceptions, the arrangement of having the public library supply circulating books and the school reference books is likely to be hard to carry out, as it is often difficult to foresee which use a book will have.

The advantage of having the public library administer the high-school library is that as the public library usually finds the librarian it insures close co-operation with the public library and a librarian with some degree of technical skill and breadth of education. The public library benefits by having a representative in close touch with the school; and the school benefits for the converse reason. This is especially the fact when the librarian attends both faculty meetings and public-library staff meetings.

The chief disadvantage of administration by the public library is that the public library can rarely afford to pay the high-school teacher's salary which the responsibility of the position justifies, and which is necessary to insure a librarian of the necessary training and experience. The plan of having

the school board appoint the librarian on the recommendation of the public librarian seems to offer a satisfactory solution for this difficulty, if the librarian is appointed on the footing of a high-school teacher with the corresponding salary.

The fact that a high-school library is administered as a branch of the public library does not imply or necessitate its use by the outside public. As will be indicated in the following paragraphs, the question of public use is decided from other considerations.

**High-school libraries as public libraries.**—It is sometimes necessary or advisable for the high-school library to serve the community as public library. This may be the case, for instance, with township high schools or high schools in small towns. In localities where there is no public library and where the demands neither of the public nor of the school are likely to develop to such an extent as to interfere with each other, such an arrangement may prove satisfactory as a permanent measure. In large or growing schools and communities, however, the two kinds of work tend eventually to conflict to the detriment of one or both. For this reason, the public library which plans to do work with the public in a high-school branch should consider the possibility of having ultimately to sacrifice that work in part or entirely as school demands develop. The peculiar problem which confronts a double-duty high-school library lies in doing justice to two different kinds of work.

One of the specific difficulties of the double-duty library is that, as at present planned, the high-school library, while possibly most conveniently situated for the school, is likely to be inconvenient for public access and to be dependent in its hours of opening on school hours. When planned for double duty, the high-school library should have an entrance from the outside and should be designed for heating and lighting independently of the rest of the building when the school is closed. A location on the ground floor, close to the street, is desirable

from the viewpoint of public use, but is not necessarily the most quiet, pleasant, and convenient location for the use of the school.

Simultaneous use by school and public during school hours presents several difficulties. Some libraries are too small even for school use, and even ordinarily adequate school libraries are liable to overcrowded periods. In building new schools this trouble can of course be obviated by planning the library big enough to begin with. Size, however, is only one side of the question. When as many as thirty or occasionally even half that number of students visit the library during a period, the time of one librarian is easily filled with routine work such as checking up permits, charging, discharging, and reserving books, looking up reference questions, supervising students' reading, and keeping the room in physical order, to say nothing of incidentals such as business with teachers, and other details peculiar to the school side of the work. Under such circumstances the librarian has little time or thought for work with the outside public. Problems of order too are possible when patrons of one kind are answerable for their good behavior to the school office, and other patrons are not. These difficulties can be overcome by excluding the public from the library during school hours: but it should be remembered that the librarian who is busy as above described also requires time for general work such as cataloging, special reference work, and planning for library instruction, tasks which cannot be carried on subject to constant interruption.

Book selection presents a dilemma. The high-school library guides the literary taste of its readers largely by excluding inferior or unsuitable literature. The public library on the other hand has to meet more varied requirements in its readers and in the selection of fiction especially must often pursue a policy which is incompatible with the more rigid educational standard of the high-school library.



Stress has purposely been laid upon the difficulties in the way of utilizing the high-school library for public work. These difficulties are least serious in small libraries but increase as libraries become larger. In fairly large city high schools the libraries of which have their full, legitimate school use, the experience and opinion of high-school librarians is that work with the public is impracticable. In the libraries of comparatively small schools, it is still to be remembered that even less than in a public library are the number of users and amount of circulation a dependable index of the library's activity and consequently of the librarian's leisure for work with the outside public. The problem in projecting a high-school library for public work is not of getting free books for the school nor free quarters for the public library. It is first to understand the different characters of high-school and public-library work and then to foresee the possibilities in both school and community. The next step is to consider whether the proposition be possible, expedient, or desirable, and, if so, whether it should be adopted as a temporary or as a permanent measure. The decision on these questions will naturally affect the location, size, and arrangement of the library.

**The librarian.**—A new high-school librarian may, among numerous possibilities, find herself in charge of a room with some unbroken boxes of books to be combined and erected into a library, or she may succeed to a thoroughly organized plant, or to a library which has outgrown the powers of the teachers' committee which assembled it.

Many states have laws or regulations relating to school libraries or affecting them by providing for their establishment or up-keep, regulating their administration, or prescribing what books they may buy. In many states, a library commission or the state education department lends books or gives advice or service to school libraries. It is therefore one duty

of the newly appointed high-school librarian to ascertain her legal duties and privileges.

In new schools, in addition to the mechanical routine of organizing, rules must be adopted for the guidance of pupils and teachers. Sometimes the library must be used while it is being organized. In reorganizing old libraries, lost books must be recovered, easy-going library habits gently reformed, teachers' confidence regained, and discipline restored among the student users of the library.

Upon the librarian rests the responsibility for the efficient use and good order of the library, and the proper condition of its records. Upon her may devolve most of the duty of book selection, especially in those parts lying outside the field of any department. In an increasing number of schools she is called upon to give instruction in the use of books. She must co-operate with teachers and preserve toward all of them a cordial but impartial attitude.

From this résumé of the duties of the high-school librarian, it will be seen that she is called on to exercise the all-round ability of the first-rate librarian of a small library and to possess a number of the qualities for teaching and leading young people which belong to a good high-school teacher. She should have a library-school training, some general library experience, and the equivalent of a high-school teacher's education in college or in university. Tact, agreeable presence, interest in young people and in the work for its own sake, and ability to co-operate with others are among the important personal qualifications.

Just how large a school should be to warrant a full-time librarian is hard to say. In one case, an academic high school with an enrolment of 400 students, and a teaching staff of 19, keeps a librarian busy 42 hours a week. A technical high school in the same city, with an enrolment of 1,400, employs a librarian 44 hours a week, an assistant 22 hours, and a page 10 hours. In neither of these schools does the librarian do cataloging, and

in the second a part of the instruction in the use of books is carried on by the English department. Neither library does work with the outside public. The city in which both are situated is well supplied with library facilities.

In schools too small or too poor to have a regular, full-time librarian, there are two permissible expedients, either a teacher, preferably of English or history, with a part of her time regularly scheduled for library work, or a library assistant shared with the public library. In the former case, the teacher should arrange, if possible, to take a course in library economy at a summer library school, or, if this be not possible, to arrange for a course of all-round practice work (including experience in the children's room) in a good public library. If a public-library assistant is chosen, she will need to know something of high schools in general, and to acquaint herself very thoroughly with the organization, curriculum, and teaching methods of that particular high school. Either teacher or librarian should thoroughly acquaint herself with the literature relating to high-school libraries, and make a special study of the books and methods of special importance in library work with high-school students.

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The high-school library.

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**LIBRARY HANDBOOKS**

Intended to help the librarians of small libraries in the various details of library work.

- 1. Essentials in library administration.** By Miss L. E. Stearns. Paper, 25 cents.
- 3. Management of traveling libraries.** By Edna D. Bullock. Paper, 15 cents.
- 5. Binding for small libraries.** Paper, 15 cents. Suggestions prepared by the A.L.A. committee on bookbinding.
- 6. Mending and repair of books.** By Margaret W. Brown. Paper, 15 cents.
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